

REMARKS

The application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated September 8, 2008. Claims 1-9 were pending. The Office Action indicates that claim 9 has been allowed. By this Amendment, claim 1 has been amended to clarify the claimed subject matter thereof, claims 7 and 8 have been amended by rewriting them into independent form, and new claims 10-20 have been added. Accordingly, claims 1-20 would be pending upon entry of this amendment, with claims 1 and 7-9 being in independent form.

Claim 1 was objected to as purportedly having informalities. Claims 7 and 8 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim.

By this Amendment, claim 1 has been amended to address the formal issues indicated in the Office Action, and claims 7 and 8 have been amended by rewriting them into independent form.

Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 7 and 8, the claims depending therefrom are now allowable.

Claims 1-6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), as purportedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,270,738 to Takahashi et al. in view of Suda (JP 4-344255).

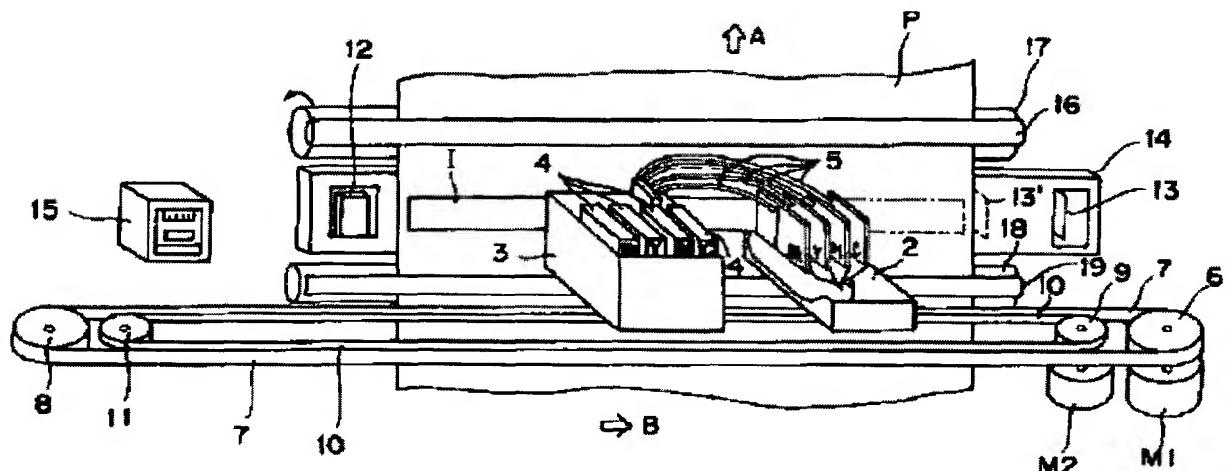
Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 of the present application is allowable over the cited art, for at least the reason that the cited art does not disclose or suggest the aspects of the present application of a cleaning device configured to clean a nozzle face of the recording head based on a tolerance threshold value of contamination of the nozzle face generated by the ejection of a liquid drop and the number of liquid drops ejected from the recording head *during image formation with electrostatic conveyance that causes adhesion of charged mist on the nozzle face of the recording head, and the number of liquid drops not reflecting the number of*

*ink drop ejections for prejection* (such as discussed in the application at, for example, page 52, lines 4-17, and page 53, line 12 through page 54, line 4).

As acknowledged in the Office Action, Takahashi does not disclose or suggest such a cleaning device, in the ink jet recording apparatus proposed therein.

Suda, as understood by applicant, proposes an ink jet recording device that is configured with a wiping member (13) and a CPU (100) that controls motors (M1, M2) and a solenoid (SoL1) to move a carriage (2) bearing recording heads to a position of the member 13. As shown in Fig. 1 (reproduced below) of Suda, recording heads 1 allocated on the carriage 2 are scanned in a longitudinal direction B, via towage of belt (7) which moves by rotation of belt pulley (6) fixed to an output shaft of head carriage motor M1 along a guide rail (not shown). A recording medium (P) is conveyed in the direction A by paper feed rollers (16, 17), such recording is performed line by line.

【図1】



However, the recording medium is conveyed in the apparatus of Suda during image

formation by paper feed rollers and NOT by electrostatic conveyance. Suda does not disclose or suggest that when electrostatic conveyance is used, the charged mist on the nozzle face of the recording head must be accounted for in determining a tolerance threshold value of contamination of the nozzle face. As mentioned above, Takahashi, like Suda, does not disclose or suggest such aspect.

The cited art simply does NOT disclose or suggest a cleaning device configured to clean a nozzle face of the recording head *based on a tolerance threshold value of contamination of the nozzle face generated by the ejection of a liquid drop and the number of liquid drops ejected from the recording head during image formation with electrostatic conveyance that causes adhesion of charged mist on the nozzle face of the recording head.*

Applicant submits that the cited art, even when considered along with common sense and common knowledge to one skilled in the art, simply does *NOT* render unpatentable the above-mentioned aspects recited in claim 1 of the present application.

Accordingly, applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 1 and the claims depending therefrom are patentable over the cited art.

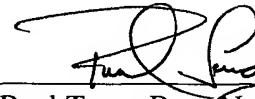
In view of the remarks hereinabove, Applicant submits that the application is now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicant earnestly solicits the allowance of the application.

If a petition for an extension of time is required to make this response timely, this paper should be considered to be such a petition. The Patent Office is hereby authorized to charge any fees that are required in connection with this amendment and to credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account No. 03-3125.

If a telephone interview could advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner

is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



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